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AN ANALYSIS OF RECIDIVISM AMONG MEN RELEASED FROM M.C.I., CONCORD DURING 1966

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I. INTRODUCTION

During the past decade a growing number of studies concerning recidivism among offenders released from Massachusetts' correctional institutions have been published. An earlier set of reports examined recidivism among offenders released around 1959 and 1960 from M.C.I. Norfolk[1], M.C.I. Walpole[2], M.C.I. Concord[3], M.C.I. Framingham[4] [5], and the three state forestry camps[6]. The present study is one of a set of follow-up studies that have examined recidivism among offenders released during 1966 from the state correctional facilities just mentioned with the exception of M.C.I. Framingham.

A statistical report[7] has been published which presents figures describing the characteristics and return rates of men released during 1966. In the near future two new base expectancy of recidivism tables will be available on men committed to M.C.I. Walpole and M.C.I. Concord respectively.

The present study of recidivism among men released from M.C.I. Concord during 1966 has three major purposes. These purposes can be briefly stated as follows:

1) To present recidivism rates for men released from M.C.I. Concord 1966. Certain types of descriptive data such as reasons for return and time elapsed before return will also be included.

2) To spotlight the various types of men who are either more likely or less likely to be returned to correctional institutions. This will involve the identification of single variables that are most closely associated with recidivism.

3) To compare and contrast, whenever possible various patterns of recidivism among men released from Concord in 1966 as opposed to those released in 1959-1960.

II. Recidivism as a Measure of the "Success" or "Failure" of the Offender and as an Indicator of the Effectiveness of the Correctional System

A rapidly growing interest in studies germane to the area of recidivism has generally reflected an overall growth in concern for what happens to offenders after their release from correctional institutions. Increased attention has been focused on numerous programs falling under the rubrics of "rehabilitation" and/or "reintegration" respectively. Questions pertaining to efforts to evaluate programs such as individual and group counseling, academic education, vocational training, pre-release guidance and several community-based correctional efforts have become vital ones to all those concerned with improving the correctional systems of this nation.

One of the central issues in the area of correctional evaluation is the choice of criteria to be employed in determining the "success" or "failure" of post-release behavior. The philosophy of the Department of Correction provides a useful framework for a discussion of this important issue. The goals of the Department of Correction have been stated in the following manner:

> The basic obligation of the Massachusetts Department of Correction is the protection of society. Part of this duty is to provide for the humane care and custody of those whom the courts have sentenced to a state correctional institution. A more challenging aspect of this obligation is to provide a truly corrective experience for sentneced offenders so that they will be better equipped to lead productive and law-abiding lives. For, if a man is returned to society more embittered, vengeful, demoralized, and incapable of social and economic survival than when he first came to prison, then we certainly will have failed in our obligation to protect society. Our goal is to return a man to society with the knowledge and skills necessary to earn an honest living, with a reasonable sense of social responsibility and self-value, and with an increased capacity for self-control, judgment and realistic optimism. Thus, the reintegration of the offender into the community life is a primary concern of the philosophy of the Department of Correction.[8]

This statement of purpose implies a wide variety of ways in which to describe and measure what happens to offenders after their release. Some

workers in this field feel a distinction should be made between measuring how law-abiding an offender is after release (e.g., subsequent rearrests or reincarcerations) and measuring how "productive" or "well-adjusted" he is within the community. It has been argued by Wilkins[9] and others that there are worse things than committing some types of new offenses (e.g., collapsing into alcoholism and allowing one's family to be supported by public welfare as opposed to occasional petty theft.) However, such a comparison, while illustrating a valid point, represents an exception to the more "normal" patterns of recidivism. Such patterns have been shown by researchers like Glueck and Glueck [10] to be strongly associated with various criteria of community maladjustment (e.g., serious involvement with alcohol or unstable employment at low paying jobs, etc.) Indeed, since parolees, who make up the bulk of releasees from correctional institutions can be returned for simply being "social failures" in the judgment of their parole officers (e.g., inability to adjust or indiscreet conduct), the entire issue seems to be a rather moot one at best.

Of far more concern to community at large are the return rates that indicate in a rough manner the percentage of offenders who are not being successfully rehabilitated by the correctional process. McGerigle has observed this and commented further that:

> "Not only does the general public make clear its belief that an offender who breaks the law represents in some sense a failure of the correctional system, even men and women who contribute many hours of devoted volunteer service in helping offenders freely express the same opinion. In addition, most definitions of recidivism are easily quantifiable and rely upon data which can be obtained from official records."

Recidivism when clearly defined is usually, as McGerigle suggests, a relatively simple measure to collect data on and the official records of its occurrence are quite reliable. However, recidivism like any other criterion that could be used for our purposes is imperfect. It is important

to have a balanced appreciation of both the strengths and weaknesses of its use in the type of study being reported here.

One of the major problems with recidivism per se is that it does not refer directly to subsequent criminal behavior, but rather to the percentage of offenders who are caught either committing new criminal offenses or violating the technical conditions of their parole. Furthermore, when employing the definition traditionally used in Massachusetts, this act of being caught must be followed by a decision to return the offender for at least thirty days before recidivism is said to have occurred.

Another practical restriction on the use of recidivism centers on the necessity of using definite follow-up periods when determining recidivism rates for specific groups of releasees. Researchers, unlike journalists in this area, are not free to use the term "recidivism" as though it represented something that occurs independently of time considerations. Administrative needs dictate that research and/or evaluation efforts be done within distinct time periods. Hence, those doing recidivism research are constrained by pracitcal considerations to define recidivism as behavior that occurs within specific time periods.

It is easy to fall into the habit of reifying both "recidivism" and "recidivism rate". It is of paramount importance to always be aware of just how these terms are defined within any given study. It is well known that recidivism can conceivably be made to represent just about anything that is desired by its definer.

Specifically for the study reported here, recidivism was defined as being (a) reincarcerated (b) within two years of release (c) for thirty days or more (d) in a county, state or federal correctional institution (e) whether as a parole violator or as a result or a conviction for a new

criminal offense. "Parole violator" means anyone who has his parole revoked for either a new criminal offense or for a technical violation of parole conditions. The recidivism rate refers to the percentage of releasees who are recidivists according to the definition just given.

III. An Examination of the Potential Uses of Base Expectancy of Recidivism Tables

Clearly, every offender does not have the same likelihood of being returned after his release. The second major focus of this study was directed at the identification of various types of subgroups of offenders with different chances regarding recidivism. One means of doing this was to construct base expectancy of recidivism categories through the use of a technique known as successive dichotomization. Using this technique, it is possible to spotlight combinations of variables that are associated with higher or lower recidivism rates. This statistical technique is further explained in the methods section on page 9. The Base Expectancy of Recidivism Table for the 1966 Walpole releases is presented on pages 20-22 of the report.

There are several potential uses for base expectancy of recidivism categories. For research purposes they can be used as a control group. As such they can help in determining whether or not a given type of correctional program is having a favorable, neutral or unfavorable influence on inmates in general or on specific types of inmates in particular. Thus, they can supply correctional decision makers with valuable information which can aid them in directing various types of offenders into appropriate correctional programs.

Another potentially important application of base expectancy tables could be in the area of parole supervision. Base expectancy tables could be used to allocate various types of offenders into different types of caseload supervision. Lower risk offenders could be assigned to minimal supervision caseloads while higher risk types could be assigned to more intensive supervision caseloads. Two major research efforts done in California[12,13] have shown that significant differences in recidivism occur within medium risk groups when parole officers have more time to devote to each individual

in their caseloads.

A number of criminologists who worked on the "San Francisco Project on Probation and Parole"[14] have suggested that a "vertical" model of caseload management would be more efficient than the conventional ones now in use. Under such an alternative method of caseload allocation various types of caseloads (i.e., minimal, regular, ideal and intensive) would be used for different offender risk groups. The implementation of any such model would, of course, depend on the extensive development and use of base expectancy categories or scores for all offenders.

The use of base expectancy scores in parole board decision making has long been a controversial issue. Hayner[15] has reported the most frequently given reasons why many parole board members are hesitant to use prediction devices as aids in their decision making activity. Many of the reasons given are valid ones and are realistic observations of the limitations of prediction devices in this area. However, they seem to point out the need for cautious and intelligent use of such devices rather than the advisability of discontinuing their use altogether.

Few would favor a total reliance on base expectancy tables or scores in making crucial decisions about whether or not to release offenders to the community. However, insofar as these decisions are to be made on the basis of an offender's risk of being returned, prediction devices should be considered as vitally important decision making aids.

As Sheldon Glueck[16] has written:

> "...the creators of prediction devices do not urge that such devices be applied in any mechanical fashion; they are adjuncts to both the individual case history and individual experience of the parole board members."

Just as prediction devices could be used in the decision to either grant or deny parole they could also be used to assist board members in making parole revocation decisions. Issues relevant to the use of technical

violations in revocation procedures are becoming crucial ones in parole supervision. Massachusetts in particular has experienced a marked increase in the number of returns for technical violations as opposed to returns for new criminal offenses.[17] The development of base expectancy categories for parolees which would consider factors related to the commission of technical violations might prove to be of great value. An analysis of the relationships between technical violations and subsequent criminal involvement might well be of considerable utility.

It is once again prudent to introject some words of caution. The ones here were supplied by John Conrad,[18] a notable observer of correctional systems throughout the world. He wrote:

> "This decision (i.e., revocation) can not be made by statistics alone, but a statistical estimate of the probable success of a plan to maintain a paroled person in the community as opposed to his return to prison could add support to the painful judgment which must ultimately be made on the basis of other factors."

Another possible area which might benefit from prediction devices could be the criminal court system. Perhaps prediction tables could be developed that would aid judges in their sentencing decisions. Just as they can add a degree of objectivity to parole board decision making such devices could assist judges in what many condider to be their most difficult and frustrating task(i.e., that of imposing sentences of criminal offenders). Also, on the court level, probation agencies could use them much in the same manner that has been suggested they be used in parole supervision.

Clearly then, parole is not the only portion of the criminal justice system that has failed to make constructive use of well-developed statistical methods.

IV. Methods Employed in the Analysis of the Concord Data

The sample consisted of all 306 inmates who were released from M.C.I. Concord during 1966. Data was collected from the files of the Department of Correction, the Parole Board, and Board of Probation. The results are presented in the following section of this report.

There were two closely related methods used to analyze the single variables of the Concord base expectancy data. The first method used was that of simple dichotomization. This method has been used by the DOC research unit in most of its past recidivism studies. Using this method, data on each of the variables are divided into two mutually exclusive categories. These two categories necessarily included each datum in the entire sample on any given variable (e.g., number of disciplinary reports: none vs. some).

A second method of analyzing single variables was used whereby special groupings within variables were compared with each other. These groupings were not the result of dichotomization and did not contain all the data available on the variables being analyzed. In order to distinguish between these partial breakdowns of certain variables and simple dichotomization, such breakdowns will be referred to as "special breakdowns".

It was noted that the practice of dichotomizing single variables did have an inherent weakness if used exclusively. In certain cases this practice can serve to obscure important differences within a given variable. In analyzing the base expectancy data for Norfolk, Concord and Walpole it was observed that significant[19] differences did occur between certain subgroups within variables that did not materialize when simple dichotomization was employed. For example, in the Concord data the variable of length of incarceration was not found to be of significance when it was divided into a high group and low group respectively. However, when the middle group

consisting of all those who had between one year and two years as their length of incarceration, was compared to the high group (two years or more) on this variable significant differences occurred.

Subsequent to this observation it was decided to employ similar special comparisons whenever necessary to complement the findings obtained through simple dichotomization.

The method used to derive the base expectancy of recidivism categories for the Norfolk releasees was that of successive dichotomization. Using this method, variables are successively divided until subgroups become too small to produce meaningful results. The initial step in using this technique is to find the most significant single variable to serve as a base for all the subsequent breakdowns to be made. Sometimes when the most significant variable produces two widely unequal subgroups it can not be used for the initial breakdown. In this case, the next most significant variable would be used.

After the initial dichotomization has been made, the sample is then further dichotomized according to which variable best discriminates between the recidivists and non-recidivists contained within each subgroup. In order to determine the variable whose subgroups are the most discriminating on each breakdown a chi-square must be computed.

V. A Brief Description of the 1966 Concord Base Expectancy Sample

As has been pointed out all 306 releasees from M.C.I. Concord were included in the base expectancy study. Of these 306 subjects; 122 (39.9%) were committed for offenses against the person; 32(10.5%) for sex offenses; 105 (34.6%) for property offenses and 47 (15.4%) for "other" offenses (e.g., drug offenses or unauthorized use of a motor vehicle). The average age of this group at the time of their present incarceration was 22.9 years with a range extending from 16 to 55 years of age. The average length of their present incarceration was 15.8 months.[20]

The 1959-1960 Concord study did not contain sufficient descriptive data on its 311 man sample to permit valid comparisons. In any case, certain differences in coding methods make meaningful comparisons between the two samples virtually impossible even when information is available.

VI. A Presentation of the Major Recidivism Findings of the 1966 Concord Base Expectancy Study

The overall recidivism rate for the entire 306 man Concord sample was 44.8% for the two year follow-up period. This figure was slightly lower than the 49% return rate for the 1960 base expectancy group.

An analysis of the reasons for return among the recidivists in the 1966 Concord sample will provide a useful background for understanding data that will be subsequently presented in this section of the report. It should also help to clarify just what is being discussed when the term "recidivism rate" is used repeatedly throughout the text of this report.

Table I. Recidivism Data for the 1966 Concord Base Expectancy Sample

A. Simple Breakdown

	N = 306	% of total
Recidivists	137	44.8%
Non-Recidivists	169	55.2%

B. Detailed Breakdown for Recidivists

	N = 137	% of total N = 306	% of recidivists
I Parole Violators	84	27.4	61.3
(a) Technical P.V.'s	46	15.0	33.6
(b) New Arrests P.V.'s	38	12.4	27.7
II New Commitments	53	17.3	38.7
(a) To houses of correction	18	5.9	13.1
(b) To M.C.I., Concord	10	3.6	7.3
(c) To M.C.I., Walpole	22	7.2	16.1
(d) To M.C.I., Bridgewater	0	-	-
(e) To outside Mass.	3	1.0	2.2

Of the 137 recidivists in the study, 84 or 27.4% of the sample were returned for parole violations. Forty-six men, 15.0% of the 306 man Concord sample, were returned for technical violations of their parole conditions. Thirty-eight men, 12.4% of the sample, were reincarcerated because they were arrested for a new offense while still on parole.

Table II below gives an indication of the specific time intervals within which the 137 recidivists were returned. In addition, it shows the percentage of recidivists who were returned as parole violators within the same one-half year time intervals.

Table II Time within which Recidivists were Reincarcerated
Concord 1966 Base Expectancy Sample

Time Interval	N	%of Recidivists	Cumulative %	% of Recidivists who were P.V.'s
0-6 months	51	37.2%	37.2%	80.4%
6-12 months	40	29.2%	66.4%	82.5%
12-18 months	32	23.3%	89.7%	65.6%
18-24 months	14	10.2%	99.9%	50.0
TOTALS	137	99.9%	- -	Overall Average 74.4%

It is important to note that almost exactly three-quarters (74.4%) of the total number of recidivists were returned as parole violators. The table shows that the first six months after release did not contain quite as high a percentage of recidivists returned as parole violators as did the second one-half year time period. Further analysis, however, revealed that it was the first 9 months after release that actually proved to be the crucial time interval for the Concord sample. The percentage of recidivists returned as parole violators during the first 9 months after release was 84.0%, while the same percentage figure for those parole violators returned after the first 9 months was 62.9%.

These findings, although perhaps not quite as significant as those for Norfolk, also point out the need for increased emphasis on community-based correctional programs during the reentry phase of the treatment process.

VII. Single Factors Most Significantly Related to Higher Recidivism Among 1966 Releasees from M.C.I. Concord

A. Using Dichotomization

There were twelve single variables that were significantly related to recidivism when dichotomized. These were, in order of significance: (1) type of release (2) number of prior property offenses (3) number of disciplinary reports (4) age at incarceration (5) number of disciplinary reports for disobedience (6) longest time on one job (7) total time incarcerated house of correction (8) prior probation status (9) total number of prior arrests (10) number of good conduct days withheld (11) number of house of correction commitments (12) last civilian address.

The single most closely related factor with recidivism in the Concord base expectancy group pertained to the type of release given to the offender. Those who were paroled from the institution were found to have much higher return rates than those who were discharged. Paroled offenders experienced a 54.4% rate of reincarceration compared to a 29.0% recidivism rate for offenders who were discharged from Concord. The added risks of being on parole (i.e., technical violations, closer supervision) as opposed to receiving an outright discharge are well known.

The second most significant variable found in the Concord sample was number of prior property offenses. It is interesting to note that only 39 out of the 306 releasees, (12.7%) of the total, had no prior property offenses. This very small group had a return rate of only 17.9%, while those having at least one prior conviction for a property offense on their records had a 48.6% return rate. Significant differences between those having 10 or more total prior offenses and those having 9 or less also occurred in the expected direction. These findings conform to patterns noted in most recidivism studies.

The next variable that was found to be related to higher return rates was one which concerned the institutional adjustment of offenders. Those having some disciplinary reports while at Concord were found to have a return rate of 54.9% as compared to a reincarceration rate of only 32.7% for those with none. Also, significant within this same area of behavior was the number of disciplinary reports for disobedience, insolence or profanity. The rates on this variable simply reflected a portion of the difference found in the more inclusive category of total disciplinary reports. This latter variable was found to be significant at the $p<.001$ level, while the differences on the disciplinary reports for disobedience variable were significant at the $p<.01$ level.

Another variable concerned with institutional adjustment that was found to be significant was the number of good conduct days withheld. Those with some good conduct days withheld had a 57.9% return rate, while those who had no loss of good conduct time had a recidivism rate of 40.4%. The differences found within the sample on this variable were significant at the $p<.01$ level.

Type of release, number of displinary reports as well as number of prior property offenses were all found to be significant at the $p.<001$ level. One other variable, age at incarceration, was also observed to be significant at this very high level. Offenders who were 20 or less at incarceration had a return rate of 57.9%, while those 21 or over, had a 37.7% return rate for the same period. This finding is one that has been noted repeatedly in past recidivism studies.

Also, constituting a very common finding is the relationship between an inmate's total time incarcerated in houses of correction and recidivism. Inmates with six months house of correction time had a return rate of 54.9%. Those with less than six months house of correction time had only a 38.0% reincarceration rate. As one might expect from this, offenders

with no house of correction commitments had a significantly lower return rate than did offenders with at least one such prior commitment.

Three more dichotomized variables used in the Concord sample were; longest time on one job, prior probation status and last civilian address[21] respectively. Having never worked more than one month on a single job, having been on some form of probation and having Boston for one's last civilian address were all positively associated with higher recidivism rates. The first two of these variables were significant at the $p<.01$ level while the latter variable, last civilian address, was significant at the $p<.05$ level.

Table III Dichotomized Variables Listed in Order of Statistical Significance
1966 Concord Base Expectancy Study

Variables	Dichotomization	Return Rate	x^2
1. Type of Release	Paroled	54.4	16.25
	Discharged	29.0	p<.001
2. Number of Prior Property Offenses	Some	48.6	13.01
	None	17.9	p<.001
3. Number of Disciplinary Reports	Some	54.9	12.53
	None	32.7	p<.001
4. Age at Incarceration	20 or under	57.9	11.55
	21 or over	37.7	p<.001
5. Number of Disciplinary Reports for Disobedience	Some	56.5	10.09
	None	37.7	p<.01
6. Longest Time on One Job	Less than 1 month	57.3	9.04
	1 month or more	37.4	p<.01
7. Total Time Incarcerated in Houses of Correction	6 months or more	54.9	8.45
	less than 6 months	38.0	p<.01
8. Prior Probation Status	On Probation	49.5	8.01
	Never on Probation	31.2	p<.01
9. Total Number of Prior Arrests	10 or more	54.9	7.31
	9 or less	39.0	p<.01
10. Number of Good Conduct Days Withheld	Some	57.9	7.04
	None	40.4	p<.01
11. Number of House of Correction Commitments	Some	54.3	5.85
	None	28.5	p<.02
12. Last Civilian Address	Boston	54.0	5.12
	Non-Boston	40.3	p<.05

B. Using Special Breakdowns

The Concord base expectancy sample yielded four significant variables when special breakdowns were used. These variables were, in order of significance: (1) length of present incarceration (2) age at first arrest (3) stability of employment, and (4) occupational status.

When the Concord sample was broken down into those with long, medium and short lengths of incarceration significant differences were observed between the medium group and the long group. Those who had served between 1 and 2 years had a 59.8% return rate, while those who served over two years had only a 32.0% return rate. This finding is related to the variable of type of release which was the most significant of the dichotomized variables. Inmates with longer time served on their present incarceration tend to be discharged at a higher rate than medium term inmates who are almost always paroled.

The next variable, age at first arrest, showed a similar pattern as did length of incarceration in that a middle range group showed a higher reincarceration rate than did a high range group. Offenders who were between 15 to 21 years old at the time of their first arrest had a 55.4% return rate, while the rate for those over 21 at their first arrest was 20.8%.

The two categories of "never worked" and "regular" within the stability of employment variable yielded significant results when compared with each other. Those who fell into the "never worked" category returned at a rate of 77.7%. Those who were classified as having "regular" job stability[22] had only a 12.5% reincarceration rate. Due to the smaller numbers included in this breakdown, the chi-square was not as great as one might expect from a percentage difference of 65.2%. This difference was, however, still significant at the $p < .02$ level.

The fourth and final significant variable obtained through special breakdowns was that of occupational status. Those categorized as "unskilled" returned at a 44.9% rate, whereas those categorized as "semi-skilled" maintained a 15.8% rate of return. This difference was significant at the $p<.05$ level.

Table IV 4 Variables Significantly Related to Recidivism After Special Breakdowns (1966 Concord Base Expectancy Study)

Breakdown	Return Rate	Chi-square
1. Length of Present Incarceration		
1 to 2 years	59.8	$x^2 = 10.71$
Over 2 years	32.0	$p<.01$
2. Age at First Arrest		
15 to 21 inclusive	55.4	$x^2 = 9.78$
Over 21	20.8	$p<.01$
3. Stability of Employment		
never worked	77.7	$x^2 = 8.01$
regular	12.5	$p<.02$
4. Occupational Status		
unskilled	44.9	$x^2 = 6.06$
semi-skilled	15.8	$p<.05$
		d.f. = 2 in all cases

VIII. Important Variables Not Significantly Related to Recidivism Among the 1966 Releasees from M.C.I. Concord

A. Criminal History Variables

1) Present Offense

   (a) property offense

   (b) person offense

   (c) "other" offense

2) Number of Prior Offenses for:

   (a) crimes against the person

   (b) sex crimes

   (c) drunkenness

3) Prior Time Incarcerated

   (a) state or federal

   (b) juvenile

   (c) overall(house of correction, state, fed., and juvenile)

4) Whether Incarcerated as a Parole Violator

B. Background Factors

1) Years of School Completed

2) Marital Status

3) Military Record

4) Religion

5) Race

6) Birthplace

IX. Base Expectancy of Recidivism Categories for Concord

A presentation of the base expectancy of recidivism categories for the 1966 Concord releasees is included on the following pages in two different forms. A brief explanation of how these categories were derived was given on page 9 of this report. The reader may find it useful to review that section before interpreting these data.

BASE EXPECTANCY OF RECIDIVISM CATEGORIES FOR CONCORD

					RETURN
TOTAL CONCORD RELEASEES DURING 1966	DISCHARGE OR EXPIRATION AS TYPE OF RELEASE N = 111	PRIOR HOUSE OF CORRECTION INCARCERATIONS TOTAL LESS THAN 6 MONTHS N = 60 18.3% Return	PRESENT OFFENSE NON-ASSAULTIVE	N = 24	4.2%
			PRESENT OFFENSE ASSAULTIVE (INCLUDES SEX)	N = 36	27.8%
	27.9% Return	PRIOR HOUSE OF CORRECTION INCARCERATIONS TOTAL 6 MONTHS OR MORE N = 51 39.2% Return	23 OR OLDER AT PRESENT INCARCERATION	N = 36	30.6%
N = 306			22 OR YOUNGER AT PRESENT INCARCERATION	N = 15	60.0%
45.8% Return		NO PRIOR PROPERTY OFFENSES		N = 26	23.1%
	PAROLE AS TYPE OF RELEASE N = 195 54.4% Return	SOME PRIOR PROPERTY OFFENSES N = 169 59.2% Return	NO DISCIPLINARY REPORTS N = 88 50.0% Return	21 OR OLDER AT PRESENT INCARCERATION N = 58	43.1%
				20 OR YOUNGER AT PRESENT INCARCERATION N = 30	63.3%
			SOME DISCIPLINARY REPORTS N = 81 69.1%	PRESENT OFFENSE ASSAULTIVE (INCLUDES SEX) N = 41	56.1%
				PRESENT OFFENSE NON-ASSAULTIVE N = 40	82.5%

1966 Base Expectancy Categories M.C.I. Concord

Total N = 306

	Description	N	% of sample	Return Rate
1.	Discharge or Expiration as Type of Release, less than 6 months total time incarcerated in a house of correction, Present offense non-assaultive.	24	7.8%	4.2%
2.	Parole as type of release, No prior property offenses.	26	8.5%	23.1%
3.	Discharge or Expiration of Sentence as type of release, Less than 6 months total time incarcerated in a house of correction, Present offense assaultive (includes sex)	36	11.8%	27.8%
4.	Discharge or Expiration of Sentence as type of release, 6 months or more total house of correction time, 23 or older at present incarceration.	36	11.8%	30.6%
5.	Parole as type of release, Some prior property offenses, No disciplinary reports, 21 or older at the time of present incarceration.	58	18.9%	43.1%
6.	Parole as type of release, Some prior property offenses, Some disciplinary reports, Present offense assaultive (includes sex).	41	13.4%	56.1%
7.	Discharge or Expiration of Sentence as type of release, 6 months or more total house of correction time, 22 or younger at present incarcertion.	15	4.9%	60.0%
8.	Parole as type of release, Some prior property offenses No disciplinary reports, 20 or younger at present incarceration.	30	9.8%	63.3%

1966 Base Expectancy Categories M.C.I. Concord (cont.)

	Description	N	% of sample	Return Rate
9.	Parole as type of release, Some prior property offenses Some disciplinary reports, present offense non-assaultive.	40	13.1%	82.5%

X. Discussion: Concord Results

Type of release, a variable that tells us very little about the characteristics of offenders per se, was the most statistically significant variable in the Concord study. Slightly less significant statistically, but of much more "significance" for analyzing various characteristics of offenders that are related to recidivism, was the variable, number of prior property offenses. This same variable was found to be the most significant one in the Norfolk study. In the Walpole study this variable was only eighth in significance when dichotomized, but first when special breakdowns were used. Hence, number of prior property offenses emerged as the single most significant predictor of recidivism within the three major 1966 samples.

Unlike the results of the Norfolk and Walpole studies, the Concord study produced significant results on a number of variables that were relevant to institutional behavior. Similar results have not usually appeared in other studies of recidivism. The total number of disciplinary reports for disobedience, insolence or profanity, and the number of good conduct days withheld were all found to be significant within the Concord sample. In addition, length of incarceration, a variable that is frequently influenced by institutional behavior, turned out to be the most significant variable after special breakdowns were used. Why institutional factors were related to recidivism among Concord releases, but not among those from Norfolk or Walpole, is an intriguing question that, perhaps, warrants further inquiry.

There were few important differences between the results of the earlier Concord base expectancy study done in 1959-60 and the 1966 study. Total number of prior penal commitments, the second most significant variable in the 1960 study, was not significant in the 1966 study. Many of the variables found to be of significance in the 1966 study were not analyzed in the earlier study so that

comparisons can not be made.

The 1966 Concord study results did not contain many significant variables that can be altered through the use of existing correctional programs. Only one dichotomized variable, longest period on one job, appeared to be directly related to the type of training that current correctional programs offer.

Prior criminal history, institutional adjustment and age variables were all predictive of recidivism in the Concord study. The Concord sample, in general, appeared to provide a wider range of predictive variables than did the Norfolk or Walpole samples. Certainly in terms of sheer numbers the Concord group produced more statistically significant findings.

Variables pertaining to prior penal commitments did appear to be under-represented in the list of significant variables. Within this general category only prior house of correction commitments appeared to be useful in predicting return rates.

FOOT-NOTES

1. Francis J. Carney, "Predicting Recidivism in a Medium Security Correctional Institution: Base Expectancy Categories for M.C.I. Norfolk", Dept. of Correction: mimeographed (June, 1966)

2. Francis J. Carney, "Predicting Recidivism in a Maximum Security Correctional Institution: Some Emerging Generalizations", Dept. of Correction: mimeographed (October, 1966)

3. Ralph Metzer and Gunther Weil, "Predicting Recidivism: Base Rates for M.C.I. Concord", Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology and Police Science (September, 1963) pp. 307-316

4. Barbara DeVault and Daivd Haughey, "Base Expectancy Categories for Predicting Parole Failure", Dept. of Correction: mimeographed (June, 1965)

5. Francis J. Carney, "Base Expectancy Categories for Predicting Recidivism of Female Drunkenness Offenders: Combined Data, Division of Legal Medicine: mimeographed (August, 1965)

6. Francis J. Carney and Estelle D. Bottome, "An Analysis of Recidivism Among Inmates Released from the Forestry Camps", Dept. of Correction: mimeographed (March, 1967)

7. Edward F. Callahan, "Statistical Tables Describing the Characteristics and Recidivism Rates of Men Released During 1966 from M.C.I. Norfolk, M.C.I. Walpole, M.C.I. Concord, and the Massachusetts Forestry Camps", mimeographed (January, 1971)

8. Taken from: Program Guide: A Review of Massachusetts Department of Correction Programs, (September, 1971)

9. Leslie T. Wilkins, Evaluation of Penal Measures, New York: Random House, Inc., 1969

10. Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck, Delinquents and Non-Delinquents in Perspective, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968

11. Paul McGerigle, "Evaluating Correctional Enterprises", A Memorandum to the Joint Correctional Planning Commission, April, 1971. p.7

12. Joan Havel, and Elaine Sulka, Special Intensive Parole Unit, Phase III, Research Report No.3, California Dept. of Corrections, March, 1962

13. Joan Havel, Special Intensive Parole Unit, Phase IV: The Parole Outcome Study, Research Report No. 13, California Dept. of Corrections Sept. 1965

14. Joseph D. Lohman, Albert Wahl, Robert M. Carter, and Leslie T. Wilkins, "The San Francisco Project Final Report," Research Report No. 12 (April, 1969)

15. Norman S. Hayner, "Why do Prole Boards Lag in the Use of Predictive Scores?" Pacific Sociological Review, (Fall, 1958) pp. 73-76.

Hayner listed five major reasons for the reluctance of parole board members to utilize parole prediction devices. They were as follows:

1) sensitivity to public opinion
2) the effect the decision might have on the use of prison time

3) the uniqueness of cases
4) legal and traditional restrictions
5) reactions to prediction devices themselves

16. Quoted by Victor H. Evjen, "Current Thinking on Parole Prediction Tables", Crime and Delinquency, Vol. 8 (July, 1962) p. 217

17. A summary of the parole statistics for the years 1968-71 indicates that in Massachusetts revocations for new felony convictions have been decreasing at a very rapid rate. Between 1970 and 1971 alone, new felony convictions for parolees under supervision declined by 32%. Unfortunately, these reports included misdemeanor offenses in the same category with all the technical violations excluding "whereabouts unknown". This, of course, makes it impossible to give specific percentages on the increasing reliance there appears to be on technical violations in revocation proceedings.

The technical violation of "whereabouts unknown" deserves special attention. This category accounted for only 21% of the technical revocations in 1960. By 1970 this percentage had grown to 35% and by 1971 to 45% of the total. It would appear that an examination of the use of this technicality is needed.

18. John P. Conrad, Crime and Its Correction, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967, p. 192

19. A note of explanation might well be useful here concerning the terms significance and level of significance.

Statistical significance simply refers to the degree to which observed differences could have occurred through sheer chance. The level of significance indicates the probability that observed differences could have occured by chance in a given number of instances. For example, a $p \leq .001$ level of significance means that the observed differences had a probability of occurring by chance in less than one time out of a thousand. In order to determine the level of significance a chi-square must be computed in each case.

For purposes of this research report the term "significant" will denote that a difference has been observed at the $p < .05$ level of significance. This is generally considered the point at which social scientists can safely assert that real differences have, in fact, been observed.

20. See: Edward Callahan op. cit., for a more detailed statistical description of thisgroup and other base expectancy groups.

21. This variable should be interpreted with some caution. The sample was dichotomized into "Boston" and "non-Boston" on this variable. It is essential to know thatthe political definition of Boston was used. Hence, many communities (e.g., Cambridge or Quincy) that are normally thought of as being both economically and culturally a part of Boston were considered as "non-Boston" for purposes of this study.

22. For purposes of this study "regular job stability" was defined as working steadily all of one's working life at one or only a few jobs.